

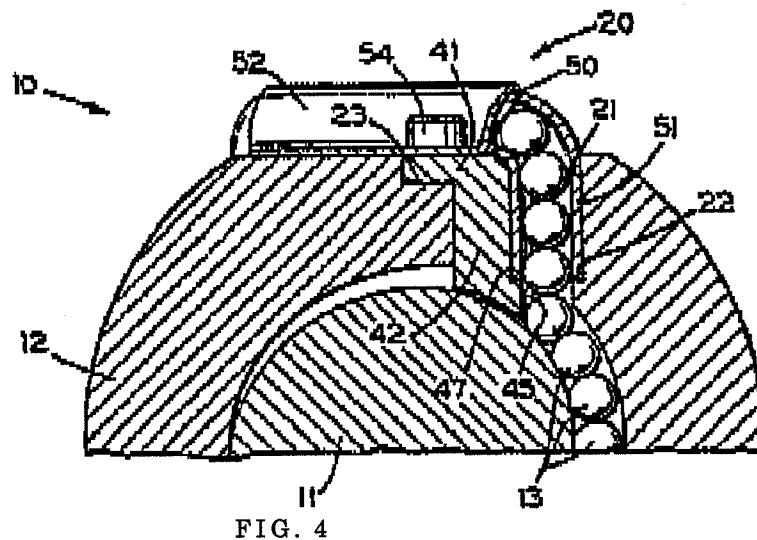
**REMARKS**

Claims 1-15, 23, 28, 29 and 33 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 9, 11-13, 15, 28, 29, 32 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 4-116051 (JP '051) in view of Rholinger (U.S. Patent No. 5,373,755). Further, claims 1-3, 7-9, 11-13, 15, 30 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conant (U.S. Patent No. 2,882,742) in view of Merkel (U.S. Patent No. 3,379,643 and further in view of Rohlinger (U.S. Patent No. 5,373,755). Still further, claims 4-6, 10 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '051 in view of Rohlinger and further in view of Ebina, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,089,117). Claims 4-6, 10 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conant in view of Merkel and further in view of Ebina, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,089,117). Finally, claims 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conant in view of Merkel, and further in view of Rohlinger. For the following reasons, Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections.

By way of review, in the response to the previous Office Action, independent claims 1 and 11 were amended by incorporating the feature of dependent claims 30 and 31 respectively. Applicant argued that cited references JP '051 and Conant fail to disclose the feature that *the tube guide is interposed between the ball scooping portion and the tube guide insertion hole without any clearance between the ball scooping portion and the tube guide insertion hole.*

In the current Office Action, the Examiner admits that JP '051 does not disclose the feature described above, and now relies upon the disclosure of Figure 4 of Rohlinger (See, the middle paragraph in page 4 of the Office Action) which is reproduced below.



However, Figure 4 is a sectional view taken along the line 4-4 of Figure 3, and is just one of the sectional views of the Rohlinger's ball screw. As shown in Figures 2 and 3 of Rohlinger which are reproduced below, there is actually a clearance between the ball scooping portion and the tube guide insertion hole.

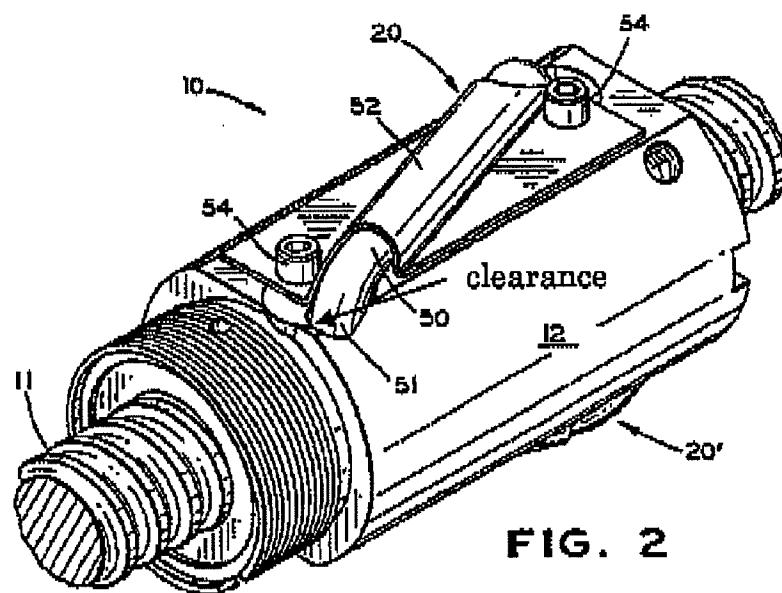


FIG. 2

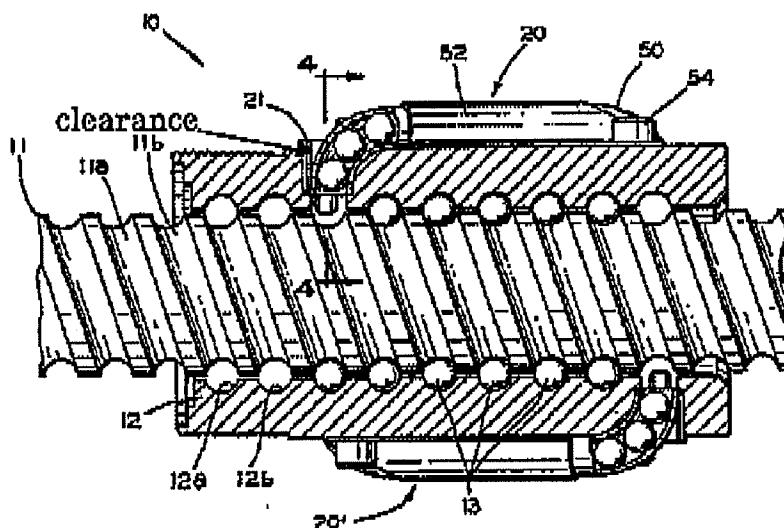
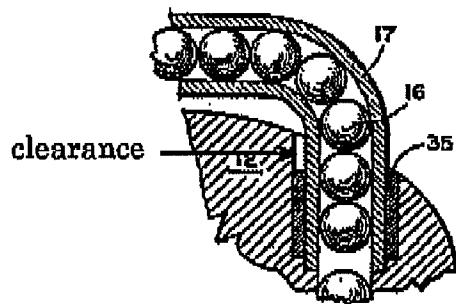


FIG. 3

Accordingly, the Examiner's reliance on Rohlinger for disclosing this feature is misplaced.

Further, the Examiner asserts that Figure 6 of Conant discloses the feature that the tube guide is interposed between the ball scooping portion and the tube guide insertion hole without any clearance between the ball scooping portion and the tube guide insertion hole.

However, as already explained in the previous response, Figure 6 of Conant clearly illustrates a clearance between the ball scooping portion and the tube guide insertion hole.



At least for the reasons given above, Applicant submits that the current rejections should be withdrawn. Indeed, the prior art does not teach or suggest the invention recited in independent claims 1 and 11 and their respective dependent claims.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116  
Application No.: 10/663,807

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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